

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 NASSAU 01664 220004Z

21

ACTION SCS-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 SCA-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 DHA-02 /053 W

----- 038631

O 212048Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8771

C O N F I D E N T I A L NASSAU 1664

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, ASEC (SHOBK, MICHAIAH)

SUBJ: SHOBK AFTERMATH

1. EMBASSY STAFF HAS CONSIDERED AT GREAT LENGTH THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE GCOB REFUSAL TO PERMIT SHOBK'S REMAINS TO BE TRANSPORTED BACK TO U.S., AS WELL AS THE COURSES OF ACTION OPEN TO US AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS. THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS INDICATE WHERE WE COME OUT.

2. GIVEN THE HISTORY OF THE PRIOR AND EXTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS WITH MINEXTAFF PERMSEC (RUSSELL) IT IS PERFECTLY CLEAR THAT GCOB WAS REMISS IN THE EXTREME IN FAILING TO INFORM EMBASSY THAT IT WOULD BE ILLEGAL UNDER BAHAMIAN LAW TO EXHUME THE BODY FOR PURPOSES OF RETURNING IT TO MRS. SPENCER ONCE IT WAS BURIED. IN FACT, THERE IS AT LEAST SOME QUESTION AS TO WHETHER THE ILLEGALITY ARGUMENT IS GENUINE. EMBASSY HAS QUIETLY CONFERRED WITH ATTORNEYS IN NASSAU ON THIS POINT. THE RESULTANT CONCLUSION AS TO THE LEGALITY QUESTION IS AMBIGUOUS. SO FAR AS WE CAN DETERMINE FROM REFERENCE TO THE STATUTES, THE DETERMINATION OF THE PLACE OF BURIAL OF AN EXECUTED PRISONER IS MADE BY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL. THE QUESTION WITH REFERENCE TO EXHUMATION INDICATES THAT THE ATTORNEY GENERAL MAY SO ORDER IF HE DEEMS IT NECESSARY TO SERVE THE ENDS OF JUSTICE. (THE ONE CASE WITH WHICH EMBASSY IS FAMILIAR INVOLVED THE EXHUMATION OF A BAHAMIAN TO SEE WHETHER AN ALLEGATION

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NASSAU 01664 220004Z

OF POLICE BRUTALITY WAS SUSTAINABLE.) WE ARE FACED, OF COURSE,

WITH THE FACT THAT THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (ADDERLEY) HAS CATEGORICALLY STATED THAT IT WOULD BE ILLEGAL TO EXHUME THE BODY FOR THE PURPOSES OF SHIPPING IT TO MRS. SPENCER.

3. THOUGH WE CANNOT OF COURSE PROVE IT, WE BELIEVE THAT THE GCOB ACTED AS IT DID OUT OF VIOLENT REACTION TO THE HANDLING OF THE SHOBEK EXECUTION BY THE U.S. PRESS. IT IS IN OUR VIEW EVEN POSSIBLE THAT THE DECISION WAS TAKEN BY THE CABINET AS A WHOLE BUT CERTAINLY, AT A MINIMUM, BY OTHERS THAN JUST ADDERLEY, E.G. PRIMIN PINDLING AND DEPPRIMIN HANNA. IF OUR PRESUMPTION THAT THIS WAS A CONSCIOUS ACTION GROWING OUT OF A DEEP ANGER IS A CORRECT ONE THE PROBABILITY OF THE GCOB BACKING AWAY IS REMOTE. ALL THE MORE SO NOW THAT THE STORY OF THEIR REFUSAL HAS BEEN REPORTED IN THE U.S. PRESS. SHORT OF OUR FINDING SOME WAY TO BRING VERY HEAVY PRESSURE TO BEAR, I DOUBT THAT ANY FURTHER REPRESENTATIONS BY THE EMBASSY WILL BE PRODUCTIVE. MOREOVER, VIEWED IN TERMS OF THE LONGER RANGE AND BROADER RANGE OF U.S. INTERESTS VIS-A-VIS THE BAHAMAS, AN EFFORT TO BRING SUCH PRESSURE, EVEN IF SUCCESSFUL, IS QUITE LIKELY TO BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE. CONVERSELY, THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE BAHAMAS WILL NOW BE SEEN IN A POOR LIGHT BY U.S. CITIZENS (THE PROBABILITY OF WHICH WAS PREDICTED TO THE GOVERNMENT) IS A MATTER WITH WHICH THIS GOVERNMENT MUST NOW LIVE. WE MADE A GOOD-FAITH EFFORT TO ASSIST IT FROM MAKING A MISTAKE, NOT TO MENTION ATTEMPTING TO POINT OUT WHAT REASONABLE CONCERN FOR HUMANITY WOULD SUGGEST, AND OUR EFFORT WAS REBUFFED.

4. COMMENT: (A) OUR PRINCIPAL CONCLUSION IS THAT WE DO NOTHING FURTHER WITH RESPECT TO THIS PROBLEM AT THIS TIME. OBVIOUSLY WE ENTIRELY BOW TO THE DEPARTMENT'S JUDGMENT ON THIS MATTER OF PRIOR PRECEDENCE OR OTHER CONSIDERATIONS TO WHICH WE HAVE NOT GIVEN WEIGHT SUGGEST A CONTRARY CONCLUSION.

(B) TO US HERE, ONE OF THE MOST DISTURBING ASPECTS OF THIS ENTIRE UNFORTUNATE AFFAIR IS THE MANNER IN WHICH ADDERLEY REACTED. LEAVING ASIDE WHETHER OR NOT HE WAS JUSTIFIED IN SHOWING ANGER AT WHAT HE CONSIDERED TO BE UNFAIR PRESS TREATMENT, THE MANNER OF HIS EXPRESSION SUGGESTS SOMETHING WHICH WE IN THE EMBASSY HAVE HAD A LONGSTANDING UNEASY FEELING ABOUT: THAT BELOW THE VENEER OF FRIENDSHIP AND PROTESTATIONS OF COMMON-CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NASSAU 01664 220004Z

ALITY OR AT LEAST CONGRUITY OF INTEREST, IS A RACIALLY ORIENTED ANTAGONISM TOWARD THE U.S. IN FAIRNESS, I MUST SAY THAT WE CANNOT BE CERTAIN THAT WE ARE RIGHT ON THIS POINT AND IT SELDOM EVIDENCES ITSELF IN SHARP RELIEF. SOME MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT, MOST NOTABLY HANNA, HAVE A REPUTATION FOR BEING ANTI-WHITE (WHICH, INCIDENTALLY, ONE WOULD THINK WOULD MAKE IT TOUGH FOR HIS MARRIAGE SINCE MRS. HANNA IS A WHITE ENGLISH LADY). PERIODICALLY THERE ARE, HOWEVER, OTHER MANIFESTATIONS

OF THIS RACIAL ANTAGONISM. IT EVIDENCES ITSELF IN THE LOCAL POLITICS WHERE THE PLP EXPLOITS THE FACT THAT OPPOSITION PARTY CONTINUES TO HAVE A WHITE MINORITY MEMBERSHIP. ONE OF THE "BRIGHT YOUNG MEN" IN THE PARLIAMENT, FRANKLYN WILSON, IS NOT LOATHE TO MAKE RACIAL SLURS ON THE FLOOR OF THAT BODY. IN SUM, THESE LIMITED EVIDENCES MAY BE REPRESENTATIVE OF A FAR BROADER AND DEEPER HOSTILITY BY NO MEANS NECESSARILY SHARED BY ALL MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY DOWN HERE, BUT QUITE POSSIBLY PREVALENT AMONGST CURRENT GOVERNMENTAL LEADERS. THIS IS A MATTER WHICH WE WILL KEEP A VERY SHARP EYE ON AS IT QUITE OBVIOUSLY COULD HAVE ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES FOR OTHER IMPORTANT U.S. INTERESTS IN THE BAHAMAS.

WEISS

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 OCT 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976NASSAU01664
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760395-1081
From: NASSAU
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761029/aaaaayly.tel
Line Count: 128
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SCS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 JUL 2004 by saccheem>; APPROVED <21 OCT 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SHOBEK AFTERMATH
TAGS: CASC, ASEC, CDES, (SHOBEK, MICHAIAH)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006